

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejection of the subject matter of this application is requested.

Status of Claims

Claim 22 has been canceled. Claim 48 is added by this paper.

Claims 1-21 and 23-48 remain for consideration. Claims 1 and 11 have been amended substantially. Other claims have been amended to change the claim dependency in view of the cancellation of claim 22.

The Drawing

The drawing appears to be acceptable as filed.

Rejection

All pending claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Hanson et al.

Argument

Prior to addressing the rejections, a brief summary of the invention may provide background for the remainder of these remarks, particularly in light of the cited prior art patent of Hanson et al.

Applicants' invention as claimed relates to attachments for voice-mail

service. The objective is to convey information or data to the called party. The distinction between the called party and the calling party is significant. In applicants' invention, as claimed, the called party receives the voice-mail message, receives the attachment, and accesses the attachment. The term "attachment" is a term of art the nature and significance of which is well known to those skilled in the art. It is known, for example, to be an entity that is separate and distinct from, but attached to or associated with, the main message. Applicants rely in part on the established status of that term to distinguish their claims from the prior art.

Turning to the rejection of applicants' claims over the Hanson et al. patent, it is first noted that Hanson et al. nowhere mention "attachment". That is for the logical reason that their patent has nothing to do with attachments. Their objective is not to convey information that is supplemental to the main message to the receiving or called party. It is to extract, using pre-arranged options, information FROM the called party and convey that information BACK TO the calling party. It is a system designed to obtain feedback.

All of the claims now pending depend from either claim 1 or claim 11. Claims 1 and 11 are similar. Taking claim 1 for illustration, the phrases highlighted below are believed to distinguish the claim from the systems described by Hanson et al. This statement recognizes the fact, mentioned earlier, that the term "attachment" has an established status in the art, and is entitled to patentable weight. It also recognizes, as mentioned earlier, that the Hanson et al. patent does not mention attachments.

Therefore, the conclusion is advanced that all of the steps in applicants' claims that refer to manipulations of attachments cannot be fairly said to be anticipated by Hanson et al.

1. A method of storing and retrieving voice-messages with attachments, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving at a receiver of the called party a voice-mail message;

receiving at a receiver of the called party a location of an attachment to the voice-mail message;

storing at a receiver of the called party the location of the attachment to the voice-mail message,

detecting by the called party the attachment to the voice-mail message; and

providing access for the called party to the attachment to the voice-mail message,

wherein the attachment is separate from the voice-mail message and the step of accessing the voice-mail message is separate from the step of providing access for the called party to the attachment to the voice-mail message.

Moreover, the system of Hanson et al. employs a single message that is stored in the voice-mail box. That message contains both the main message and the options for reply. If the rejection is based on the supposition that the options in

the message of Hanson et al. are equivalent to applicants' attachment, then the last limitation of the claim above is not met. That is, the "attachment" of Hanson et al. is not separate from the voice-mail message. The claim above includes the retrieval of the attachment as a step that is separate from retrieval of the voice-mail message. That amplifies the essential difference between the attachment implementation of applicants' method and the feedback method of the patent.

In view of the amendments and these remarks, reconsideration of the rejection is requested.

In the event that the Examiner concludes that a telephone call would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited and encouraged to call the undersigned attorney at Area Code 757-258-9018.

Respectfully,



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